

THE “*CONDER*” TOKEN

COLLECTOR'S JOURNAL

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONDER TOKEN COLLECTOR'S CLUB

Volume XI Number 3 Fall, 2006 Consecutive Issue #41



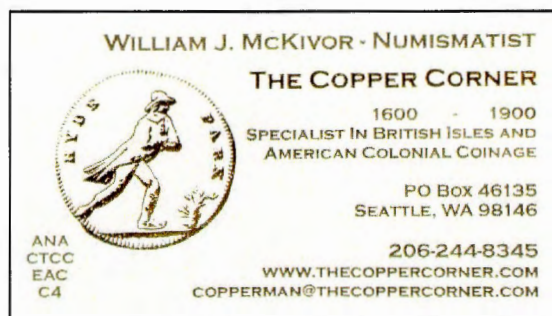
WARWICKSHIRE 18

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Volume XI Number 3

Fall 2006

Consecutive Issue #41

| | | |
|---|--|----------------|
| Introduction | Michael Grogan | Page 4 |
| The Library , From “The Bazaar, Exchange and Mart” | Richard Thomas Samuel Gregg Moore | Page 6 |
| Essex Edgeways | Tony Fox | Page 11 |
| Thomas Sharp-Token Triple Threat | Harold Welch | Page 17 |
| The David Spence Collection | Peter Preston-Morley | Page 21 |
| From the Mailbag | Peter Preston-Morley | Page 22 |
| Iron Bridge Construction | Bill Wahl | Page 23 |
| Isaac Newton’s Tokens | Tom Fredette | Page 26 |
| Four New Varities of Camac Tokens | Gregg Silvis | Page 30 |
| Conder Questions and a Poem | Richard Coult | Page 33 |
| Officer Directory | | Page 34 |
| New Members | | Page 34 |
| Exchange and Mart | | Page 35 |



Warwickshire 312

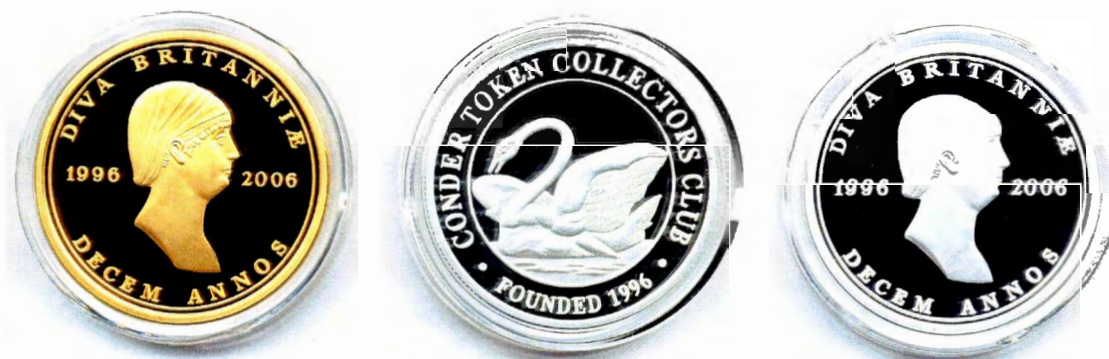
Image Courtesy of GROLLCOINS.COM

INTRODUCTION

MICHAEL GROGAN

2006 CLUB MEMBER MEDAL FOR OUR TENTH ANNIVERSARY

The CTCC is very pleased to include with this issue a copper medal commemorating our club's tenth anniversary. The 39mm medal has our traditional Swan reverse and an obverse design based on the extremely rare Warwickshire 18 featured on the cover. In addition to the copper medal, very limited edition encapsulated [as shown] and cased silver and gilt proof strikes are available for sale to members. Only 25 silver and 20 gilt proof medals were produced so order yours early to avoid disappointment as a quick sellout is expected.



Medals may be ordered from Scott Loos PO Box 2210 North Bend WA 98045
[425] 831-8789 scottloos@msn.com

The price of this year's medals is \$30 plus \$3.50 shipping. A small price increase is necessary this year for the first time since 1999 to cover higher metals and postage costs.

Member medals have been produced when the club treasury and other circumstances permit since 1999. A complete gallery of the club medals can be seen on the CTCC website <http://conderclub.org/medals.html>. Don't miss this opportunity to add this year's beautiful and rare commemorative medals to your collection.

NEW JOURNAL PUBLISHER

Eric Simmons has assumed the volunteer duties of printing and distributing the CTCC Journal. Eric has long been active in the hobby and maintains a Conder related website <http://www.unsogno.net/conders>. Welcome Eric, and thanks for helping the club.

"TOKEN TALES" RETURNS

Harold Welch has supplied another group of "Token Tales" by R.C. Bell so our long running series of these popular articles will resume in the next issue.

ARTICLES NEEDED

Your article is needed for the next issue of the Journal. This issue offers a great variety of interesting reading on a variety of Conder token topics. Consider making a contribution to the next issue. I will be glad to help any member get started or put the final polish on an article. Note that any member contributing a major article will receive a special color edition of that issue as our thanks.

IN THIS ISSUE

Our series of classic token literature from Samuel's "The Bazaar, Exchange and Mart" continues with Part 3 of the Introduction and a description of Buckinghamshire 3. Tony Fox concludes his articles on Essex tokens with a detailed look at token edge inscriptions and their relationship to the token issuer's intent. Token collector, issuer and author Thomas Sharp is examined by Harold Welch. Peter Preston-Morley summarizes the Spence collection sale and comments on "slabbing" Conder tokens. The construction of the iron bridges seen on Shropshire and Durham tokens is described by Bill Wahl. Isaac Newton's somewhat surprising appearance on Conder halfpence and farthings intrigues Tom Fredette and new Camac varieties are illustrated by Gregg Silvis. Contemporary poetry about Leek tokens is contributed by Richard Coult. Our regular features, including The Exchange and Mart, and a welcome to nine new members round out an excellent issue of the Journal. Enjoy.

ON THE COVER

The extremely rare Warwickshire 18 is a uniface strike of the also very rare Warwickshire 19. The reverse of Warwickshire 19 declares it to be "THE WORK OF JOHN GREGORY HANCOCK AGED 9 YEARS." This leads into one of the great Conder controversies as it seems unbelievable that this wonderful die engraving could be done by a child. Leaving all discussion of the controversy aside, the token is truly beautiful and an excellent choice as the basic design for our Anniversary medal. The image is from Harold Welch who also has the token in his collection.

ISSUE 40 CORRECTION

Bill McKivor has correctly pointed out that Thomas Spence's Little Turnstile shop was in Holborn, not Holban, London. My thanks to Bill for the correction and apologies to our members and Mr. Spence for incorrectly locating his historic shop.



"Peeping Tom" peers from a window on Thomas Sharp's Warwickshire 312.
Image from GROLLCOINS.COM

The Library

PROVINCIAL COPPER COINS, OR TOKENS
(EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES)

**Give a man a reasonable hobby And
you do something to promote his intellectual
and moral welfare.**

The following is part 3 of the continuation of the first part of Samuels introduction to the Provincial Copper Coins, or Tokens series of articles which was begun in the Spring 2006 CTCJ. The date of this segment of the introduction is January 19 of 1881.

"Posterity will look with astonishment at the number and variety of provincial coins struck by various descriptions of men in the present (eighteenth) century, and so far exceeding in design and workmanship the little town-pieces and tokens issued about a hundred years ago." Thus in 1797 wrote the reviewer of a publication, which had recently appeared, purporting to give a list of these coins.*

...Such opinions at once invest the subject with much greater interest than that with which the ordinary reader might at first be disposed to regard it, and , speaking from twenty years' experience, we can affirm our belief in the views expressed.

"If even one-third only of the number of these tokens be allowed to be estimable from variety of design, interesting objects represented, or good execution, can the same be justly said of a like number of any series, in any metal, of any of the national coinages of kings in modern Europe from the days of Cunobeline? The reply which every reader intelligent on the subject and unfettered by prejudice must give to this query may reflect no small consequence on it." These are the words of the late eminent Mr. James Wright,** of Dundee, who thoroughly understood and appreciated medallic art; and when it is remembered that such artists as Droz, Kuchler, Dumarest, Phelps, Hancock, the two Wyons, and Milton, were among those who designed many of these tokens, it will be readily conceded that the array of talent presented is an imposing one, and should justify what has been said on the subject, for it comprises some of the most celebrated men of the

* Birchall's "Descriptive List," Leeds 1796, 8vo., Gentleman's Magazine.

** We think it more than probable that Mr. Wright was the author of the article signed "Civis" before quoted. (We know now, of course, that it was in fact Mr. Wright, who wrote several numismatic related articles for magazines under the moniker "Civis")

day engaged in such pursuits at Birmingham, the Soho Works, and even the Royal Mint. We may here notice an interesting fact in connection with this subject. The art of die sinking which has been practiced in Birmingham, "that mart of industry and school of die sinkers" for upwards of two centuries, it seems, has latterly fallen into decay, and while, in former times, know men of ability, such as some of those we have mentioned, formed part of the regular staff of the manufacturer's establishment, there has been a splitting up of the old departments into separate and independent trades, and though each still requires the services of the die sinker, scarcely a single manufactory can now find constant employment for even an individual artisan of this description. The workmen turned adrift from the older manufactories became competitors with their former employers, and not having such heavy expenses to bear, could do the work cheaper, and the profits being thus reduced, die sinking no longer offered the same inducement to men of large capital to embark in it; and for many years past there has been no large house, we are told, engaged in the business. The die sinker now works for several masters, who, being always anxious to secure the credit of the design, not only suppress his name, but in many cases substitute their own for it; thus he seldom gets credit with the public for his work, and, except in the very rare cases of his being an accomplished medalist, for the most part, carries on his somewhat precarious trade, perhaps in a garret, up a court, in a back street, out of sight and out of mind of the general public, as an outdoor journeyman, or, at best, as a small master employing two or three hands.*



The Die Sinker's Art 1801

The manufacture of the tokens of the eighteenth century has been termed a remarkable branch of the British coinage, the estimated quantity of 600 tons having been produced at Birmingham alone between the years 1787 and 1797,

* "The Resources, &c., of Birmingham," London, 1866, 8vo.

and they afforded a vast public convenience, as most of those issued during the earlier years of their circulation contained nearly their nominal value in copper, besides possessing the pledge of the issuer for payment on demand. In the first instance, public convenience, rather than private profit, was probably considered; but other ideas evidently affected the issue of subsequent supplies, when they were, in fact, not so much needed, and thus even some of the later genuine tokens were not intrinsically equal to those at first struck. We say of the genuine tokens advisedly, for the same ingenuity which thrived so well upon the imitation of the legal currency turned its attention to the manufacture of inferior tokens, and Birmingham again flooded the market with those of much less value, containing no promise to pay, and which, while not counterfeits or imitations, were fraudulent, though openly sold to all comers, and these, at the time, would be likely to be more readily received by the public generally than the base issue purporting to be national coinage.



Warwickshire 395f Counterfeit

Image by Cheapside Tokens

It is worth while pausing for a moment to consider the peculiar state of the copper currency at this period, as it is not easily realized. Here, then, we have a small proportion of regal, and probably often much worn, coins, mixed with an overwhelming quantity of bad imitations, a large number of honest tokens, and a host of inferior ones, all circulating at the same time; and one can well imagine that poor and ignorant people, to say nothing of others, much have had the greatest difficulty in knowing of what their change really consisted, while it is only reasonable to conclude that where the choice rested between a certainly bad halfpenny and a doubtful token, the latter would stand the better chance of being accepted. "Birmingham, then, while actively engaged in the manufacture of the authentic tokens, did a fair business in the fabrication and sale of inferior ones, thus meeting alike the demands of honest and of unscrupulous customers at the

same time. It may possibly be urged, however, that there is a great distinction to be drawn between the "subterraneous forgers," as they have been termed, who counterfeited the legal currency, and the manufacturers who sold the inferior tokens in open market, but we find this to be one of degree only, for the "Smasher" differed from his more respectable neighbor merely in working for himself and defrauding the public direct, whereas fraud, both branches of the industry requiring utterers.

"The connection of Birmingham with coinage," says Heaton, "in its legitimate and illegitimate developments has conferred upon us such lasting discredit and such lasting honour;" and, in taking a general view of the tokens of the eighteenth century, it now becomes our pleasing duty to give that town credit for the production of by far the larger number of genuine ones issued, for of those struck in London it has been remarked that, in point of execution, they were, with few and scarcely redeeming exceptions, a disgrace to the period in which they were coined;** while those emanating from Birmingham were, as a rule, good, and in very many instances fine specimens of art; and that town, which has evinced so much energy and public spirit, if its lustre were for a time partially dimmed by its unfortunate connection with the practices to which we have alluded, will always be able to point with pride to its legitimate productions in the coinage of the past and present centuries, the Soho Mint, and the names of Boulton, Watt, and Heaton being of world-wide renown, and immeasurably more than sufficient for ever to redeem its fame from the obloquy which it temporarily, and not unjustly, suffered.

Boulton was a bright example of a man who, while having the requisite appliances on the largest scale, refused all participation in this nefarious trade. "I lately received a letter from a Jew, about making for him a large quantity of base money," he writes to a friend under date December, 1787, "but I should be sorry ever to become so base as to execute such orders"; and he endeavored to stop such practices being pursued by others.

The designs adopted in this coinage are so varied that they will be best gathered from the general description of the tokens which will be given hereafter.

* "The Resources, &c., of Birmingham," London, 1866, 8vo.

** The token's fabricated in London were principally for sale to collectors, and not for circulation, as will be shown hereafter.

This concludes the third installment of Samuel's Introduction to the Provincial Copper Coins, or Tokens, with the date of January 19, 1881. The next installment of the introduction with a continuance of the same date will appear in next years winter edition of the Journal.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

There are very few specimens to be noted for this county.

AYLESBURY

Halfpence



Buckinghamshire 3 Image by Joel Spingarn

No. 2. *Obverse*. – Figure of Justice seated in an antique chair to right, holding in her right hand the scales, and in her left the sword, as usual and emblematical.

Legend. – “Aylesbury Half-Penny” with an ornament before and after the word “Half” and a small star in the exergue.

Reverse. – Arms [per pale gules and sable, a swan, wings expanded and inverted argent], presumably intended for those of Buckingham, but the swan is not “gorged and chained” as, in that case, it should be.

Legend. – “Buckinghamshire”; and date “1796” with two dots and a small ornament on either side of the figures.

Borders – Ribbed.

Edge. – Plain

Notes. – Artist, James ; manufacturer ,Skidmore [both of London] ; issuer , Francis Wheeler.

Design and Execution. – Mediocre.

Rarity. – Very Scarce.

The next coin in the series to be presented will be the Buckinghamshire DH 7. We encourage you to send in any unique information you may have on this coin; any quality photos of a unique die variety; any metals other than copper, or a particularly spectacular example for publication in our Journal.

This would greatly enhance our own efforts and would be most appreciated.

Sincerely, Gregg Moore

Essex Edgeways: The Key to Issuer's Intent

Tony Fox

Conder tokens were made for several reasons. Some were truly intended as small change, in an era when the government of the day had minted no copper coins for a long time and was unconcerned about helping the small transactions of bakers and publicans. Other issues were clearly intended for collectors, for example the rare issues in brass or silver in Essex, and the Skidmore series from Middlesex. Then again, some specimens are probably production errors. Others are fakes.

In sorting out the intent of the Essex issues, their edges are generally more important than the obverses and reverses. The purpose of this article is to determine the intent of the token-issuer for each of the issues of the county of Essex within a simple framework of all the alternatives (1). If in doing so, this framework provokes disagreement or debate, then the author would be very glad to hear about it, and, doubtless, so will be the correspondence pages of *Conder Token Collector's Journal*.

In presenting this plan, two ideas are crucial. These are fundamentals about the manufacturing process, and how to assess whether a particular Conder is common or rare.

Firstly, it is assumed here that during the manufacturing process the edges of Conder blanks (if any) were applied before the obverse and reverse. As Bill McKivor (CTCC #3) has kindly pointed out, the crucial evidence for this is that specimens exist with edges applied but which are otherwise blank front and back.

Secondly, the best evidence we have at present for relative scarcity of Conders is still D&H (2). A modern census of all known Conders is probably impossible. A sample-census could be biased by collectors' interests and those who would contribute to the sample. While it is true that during the last century some Conders must have both been found and lost, these are not likely to be disproportionate in comparison to those known to D&H. Therefore, we must, at least for the time being, rely on D&H for Conder scarcity.

Framework: The Classification of Intent

Conders are found in the state that they were intended (here called "Genuine"; G), could be manufacturing errors ("Errors"; E), or are deliberately made to look extraordinary after manufacture ("Fakes"; F). We can further sub-divide these three main classes:

- GC: Genuine for collectors; made specifically or trial pieces
- GR: Genuine redeemable; issuer has intent to redeem token
- GR2: Genuine redeemable second issuer; re-use of design / die by second issuer
[third issuer GR3, etc.]
- GNR: Genuine not redeemable; issued without intent to redeem

ED: Error deliberately; manufactured with economy of pre-edged blanks.
ET: Error truly; an error resulting when an edged blank gets the wrong obverse and reverse (this happens today even at the Royal Mint, as kindly pointed out by Graham Dyer, esq.)

F: Fake; Coins altered after production, e.g., to produce an extremely rare plain edge in a lathe.

Genuine for collectors, or trial pieces (GC), would include those not intended for any currency purpose. These typically have a provenance that is known historically to be for that purpose (e.g., the Skidmore series). Alternatively, proof specimens are clearly intended either for collectors or as trial pieces (at least one example of these, for Hornchurch, exists amongst the Essex issues). These are not likely to be common because, otherwise, they would either be easy for collectors to obtain (with a low retail price) or could even circulate. Coins in exotic metals or with exotic denominations also easily fall into this category.

In sorting out the genuine copper issues, we can probably rely on the edges and whether they are common or not for that particular combination of obverse and reverse. For example, we would expect genuine redeemable original and re-used design (GR, GR2, etc.) issues to be common and to name the issuer and his or her home town.

The genuine tokens without intent to redeem (GNR) should also ordinarily be common. These are likely to have edges that are either plain, milled, or mention a few towns or cities in a non-specific manner.

Among the errors, the truly mis-used blanks (ET) should be very rare. The deliberately manufactured errors (ED), perhaps economizing on a spare supply of blanks that already had edges applied, should be common.

Fakes (F) are likely to be rare. A forger with a good lathe would be daft to spend a huge amount of time re-making a large number of plain edges because the retail unit price of the specimens would fall. Instead, the profit-making forger would spend his time re-making large numbers of *different* Condors, and unwitting collectors, recognizing these rare specimens, would be his target market.

The Essex Condors within this framework

Easiest of all are the rare silver (D&H Essex 1, 4) and brass issues (D&H Essex 11, 12, 19). The silver can be assumed to be for collectors (GC). The brass are probably also for collectors, although, I suppose, could also be trial pieces. However, the latter seems unlikely: brass is tougher than copper, and whacking one's new dies on the harder type of blank seems irrational in an era before the International Fairs where one's best output might be displayed. Brass is also more reactive than copper, and thus harder to keep

clean for any other display purpose, and cleaning, of course, is likely to degrade the images and thus not help the exhibitor or salesman. Net, the rare brass are probably all GC, too. To these can be added an Essex oddity, the copper Epping D&H nos. 1, 1a, 1b; it is odd because it has the exotic denomination of one shilling, even though the flan is a standard half-penny-sized (4).

Occasional other issues are obvious. The Braintree 4b palimpsest is clearly a special case of GR2. Legends such as "Current everywhere" are clearly GNR.

Leaving these oddities, with their obvious intent, aside we can now approach the mass of Essex copper Conders. The Table provides the analysis, taking rarity RR as evidence of either deliberate or true errors when seemingly intended as redeemable.

Footnotes:

1. Much is owed in this article to the wisdom and experience, so generously shared, of Graham Dyer esq. of the Royal Mint Museum and Bill McKivor (CTCC #3, "The Copperman").
2. The author apologizes for his prior promise that the series of Essex articles was finished. That promise is now repeated, and it will be Sussex or Suffolk next.
3. Dalton R, Hamer SH. *The Provincial Token-Coinage of the 18th Century*. London: B.A. Seaby Ltd., reprinted 1967, pp.30-34.
4. Fox AW. The Epping Forest issues. *Conder Token Coll J* 2005; **X(2)**: 10-15.



ESSEX 35
MALDON

Table. Essex issues sorted by intent. *Putative. S:-Scarce; C:-Common; R, RR, etc: Rarity scale per D&H

| Place of issue* | D&H Essex | Edge | D&H Rarity | Classification |
|-------------------|--------------|--|---------------|--------------------|
| Epping | | | | |
| | 1 | Spence x dealer x in x coins x London | R | GC |
| | 1a | Milled | RR | GC |
| | 1b | Plain | R | GC or F |
| Wanstead | | | | |
| | 2 | I promise to pay the bearer...(1d.) (See Middlesex 124) | S | GC |
| Braintree | | | | |
| | 3 | W Goldsmith's Braintree Essex | R | GR |
| | 3a | Payable in London, Bristol and Lancaster | RR | ET or ED (of no.3) |
| | 4 | As no.3 | C | GR |
| | 4a | Plain | R | ED (of no.3) |
| | 4b | We promise to pay the bearer one cent | RR | GR2 (palimpsest) |
| | 4c | Payable at South Shields and London | RR | ET or ED (of no.4) |
| | 4d | Payable at Dallys Chichester (see also Norfolk 12a & Sussex 15) | RR | ET or ED (of no.4) |
| | 4e | Richard Bacon Cocky Lane) | C | GR2 |
| Chelmsford | | | | |
| | 5 | Clachar & Co Chelmsford | C | GR |
| | 5a | Richard Bacon Cocky Lane (see also Norfolk 12) | RR | ED or ET (of no.5) |
| | 5b | Payable in Hull and London | C | GNR |
| | 5c | Payable in London Bristol and Lancaster | RR | ED (of no.5) |
| | 5d | Current everywhere | RR | ED (of no.5) |

Table. Essex issues sorted by intent (contd.)

Chelmsford (contd.)

| | | | |
|----|---|----------|--------------------|
| 6 | Payable in London | C | GNR |
| 6a | Plain | RR | ED (of no.6) |
| 7 | Milled | C | GNR |
| 7a | Payable at I Jordan Draper Gosport (see also Hampshire 40) | RR | ET or ED (of no.7) |
| 7b | Plain | RR | ET or ED (of no.7) |
| 8 | Richard Bacon Cocky Lane | RR as 5a | ET (of 8a) |
| 8a | Current everywhere | C | GNR |
| 8b | Plain | RR | ET (of 8a) |
| 8c | Payable at Dallys Chichester | RR | ET (of 8a) |

Colchester

| | | | |
|-----|--|--------|---------------------|
| 9 | Charles Heaths | Scarce | GR |
| 10 | Charles Heaths | C | GR |
| 10a | Richard Bacon Cocky Lane | Scarce | GR2 |
| 10b | Willey Snedshill Bersham Brodley (see also Warwickshire 335, 336,340-368) | RR | ET or ED (of no.10) |
| 10c | Payable at the warehouse of John Stride (see also Hampshire 15c) | RR | ET or ED (of no.10) |

Dunmow

| | | | |
|-------|---------------------------|--------|---------------|
| 11 | Milled | Scarce | GNR or GC |
| 11a | Skidmore Holborn London | R | GC |
| 11b | Plain | C | GC |
| 12 | Mule with Middlesex 324 c | C | GNR or GC |
| 12a | Milled | RR | ET (of no.12) |
| 13-32 | Skidmore or milled, all | --- | GC |

Table. Essex issues sorted by intent (contd).

Hornchurch

| | | | |
|-------|--------|---|-----|
| 33 | Plain | C | GNR |
| 33bis | Plain | C | GNR |
| 34 | Plain | C | GNR |
| 34a | Milled | C | GNR |

Leigh 42 Now Worcestershire. See this journal Vol.X(1), 2005, pp.14-18.

Maldon

| | | | |
|----|----------------------|---|----|
| 35 | W Drapers Watchmaker | C | GR |
|----|----------------------|---|----|

Warley

| | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|--------|----|
| 36 | Warley Camp halfpenny | C | GR |
| 36a | Ditto, MDCCXCIV | Scarce | GR |
| 37 | Ditto | Scarce | GR |
| 38 | As no.36 | Scarce | GR |
| 38a | As no. 36a | C | GR |

Woodford

| | | | |
|-----|---|----|---------------------|
| 39 | Plain but W Brooks on reverse | R | GR |
| 39a | Payable at his office Newport (see also Hampshire 46 c) | RR | GR |
| 39b | N. Hollingbrooke haberdasher Norwich (see also Norfolk 14) | RR | ET or ED (of no.39) |
| 39c | Payable in London Lancaster or Bristol | RR | ET or ED (of no.39) |
| 39d | Payable at the warehouse of Jonathan Garton & Co. (see also Yorkshire 17-19) | RR | ET or ED (of no.39) |

[“Woodford nos. 40 &41” are St.Albans (Hertfordshire) and Dublin (Ireland) as noted by D&H.

Woodford 43 is a scarce farthing mule from Woodford 39 and Woodford 40 or 41, and is thus probably not Essex].



from Davis' *Nineteenth Century Tokens*

Thomas Sharp (1770 – 1841)

by T. S. Cotman Esq. Sept 1823

Thomas Sharp – Token Triple Threat by Harold Welch

The Coventry antiquarian, Thomas Sharp, along with Conder and Pye was a token triple threat. He was a token issuer, collector and author. S. H. Hamer gives a biography of Sharp in his work *Notes on the Private Tokens, Their Issuers and Die-sinkers* (published in installments in the 1904, 1905 and 1906 volumes of the *British Numismatic Journal*), which is was, in turn, based upon a memoir of Sharp by W. G. Fretton included in the 1871 reprint of Sharp's *Illustrative Papers on the History and Antiquities of the City of Coventry*. However, as Hamer and Fretton both supply information not given by the other, I'll present a synthesis of the two biographies along with information gleaned from a variety of addition sources:

Thomas Sharp was born November 7, 1770 in the house that was purported to have belonged to Peeping Tom - the voyeur of the Lady Godiva legend. Perhaps Thomas Sharp was destined to become a historian. He was educated at the Free School; for about four years he lived with his uncle Henry Sharp, who intended him to study for the Church; but as his father died in 1784, he returned home to assist in managing the business, which he subsequently conducted on his own account. In business he was a hatter.

Sharp, ultimately known as a token cataloguer and authority, was himself a token issuer. There are several minor variations that encompass D&H Warwickshire 307-314. His tokens depict a seated Britannia-like figure leaning upon a sword and holding a shield with displays the arms of Coventry. Across the top is the legend, "CIVITAS COVENTRY" and in the exergue, "MDCCXCVII". The reverse features his birthplace, Peeping Tom's house. The figure of the voyeuristic tailor can be seen in a niche! The exergue of two of the varieties read, "MEMORIÆ GODIVÆ".

Warwickshire DH 312



Image by Joel Spingarn

Among his most intimate friends was Mr. John Nickson, another coin collector, antiquary and token issuer. Spanning D&H Warwickshire 303-306, Nickson's tokens depict, "THE FREE SCHOOL OF COVENTRY" and its founder John Hales. Note the Free School was Sharp's alma mater. Apparently their friendship commenced while still schoolboys. Nickson was the senior partner in Nickson and Townsend a leather-manufacturing firm. A member of the Society of Friends, Nickson died at Leamington in 1830.

During the excitement caused by the French Revolution in 1797, Mr. Sharp enrolled himself as a member of the 1st troop of the Warwickshire Volunteer Cavalry, in which he continued to serve until the corps was disbanded. Perhaps it was at this time Sharp met the prominent token collector, Thomas Welch, who commemorates his service in the 2nd troop with a token of his own (D&H Warwickshire 26-28).

At an early age Sharp showed a taste for local antiquities, and often contributed communications of that nature to *The Gentleman's Magazine* under the signature of "Σ". In 1792 his friend George Howlette, watch manufacturer, was elected Mayor, and thus access was obtained to the numerous books and documents preserved in the city treasury at St. Mary's Hall; the opportunity was taken advantage of, and Mr. Sharp's classical knowledge rendered him competent to investigate the records, from which he made numerous extracts, these forming the basis on which he compiled his works.

He married, December 26, 1804, Charlotte Turland of Barnwell in Cambridgeshire, and having retired from his retail trade, removed to Little Park Street, where he resided for many years, still carrying on his wholesale business. Sharp involved himself in many charitable, church and community works.

In 1825 he published his most important work entitled *A Dissertation on The Pageants, or Dramatic Mysteries, anciently performed at Coventry by the Trading Companies of that City: chiefly with reference to the vehicle, characters, and dresses of the Actors. Compiled in a great degree from sources hitherto unexplored; to which were added the Pageant of the Shearman and Taylor's Company, and other municipal entertainments of a public nature.* Two hundred and fifty copies were printed on royal, seventy-five on imperial quarto, and three on large paper (*the work was reprinted in 1973.*)

Sir Walter Scott in a letter to Sharp in 1826 thus expressed his opinion of the work. "I have received great pleasure from your beautiful and masterly edition of the Coventry Mysteries. I have not been more struck for this long time with an antiquarian publication, for both the carefulness and the extent of research, as well as the interesting selection of illustrations raise it to the very highest class among books of that description."

Sharp's knowledge also of engraved portraits and their arrangement was so extensive and exact, that he was enabled to illustrate a copy of *Granger's Biographical History of England*, with such skill and success, that he afterwards disposed of it for upwards of a £1,000. He took an active interest in the formation of the Warwickshire Natural History and Archaeological Society in 1836, of which he was vice-president, and, in conjunction with his friend William Staunton, acted as honorary curator of the archaeological section.

In his biography, Mr. Fretton details Sharp's numismatic activities: "He had for many years been a collector of ancient coins, and his cabinet contained a great number of both Roman and English, the most important of these was a half-florin of Edward III, which is believed to be unique, and is now in the British Museum. An account of this coin, with an engraving (from a drawing supplied by Mr. Sharp) will be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October 1800, p. 945. He also collected a series of thirty-three Coventry tokens, which he subsequently had engraved (*Fretton may be a bit confused here, I think it was a series of drawings in Sharp's possession, not tokens*); and in conjunction with Mr. John Nickson and Mr. E.(dmund) W. Percy, of Leamington, had twenty-four medals struck at Birmingham, on which were represented the more important of the ancient and modern buildings of Coventry. A few impressions were taken in silver and copper, and the dies immediately afterwards destroyed." There is also a rare series with the head of Handel as a reverse.

To token collectors Sharp is best known as the author of *A Catalogue of Provincial Copper Coins, Tokens, Tickets, and Medalets, issued in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Colonies, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Arranged according to Counties, etc. With particulars of their fabrication, names of the artists, and miscellaneous remarks illustrative of the rarity of particular specimens. Described from the originals in the collection of Sir George Chetwynd,*

Baronet, of Grendon Hall in the County of Warwick. Hamer notes, "This work, being for private distribution, only sixty copies [more likely 52] were printed in 1834. Of my two copies, both from the library at Grendon Hall, one is on larger and thicker paper than the other and is extra illustrated with illustrations from other works, mounted on the wide margin".

While compiling this work Sharp resided for some months at Grendon Hall. In 1835, Mr. Sharp occupied Grendon Hall once again while forming collections for a memoir of Sir George Chetwynd's grandfather, Walter Chetwynd, Esq., of Brocton Hall, Staffordshire. Walter Chetwynd was Under Secretary of State for the Home Department under the celebrated Lord Chesterfield in 1745.

Having lived for over sixty years at Coventry, Sharp retired from business about the year 1834 and removed to Leamington. His last illness was very lingering and was attended with great disability. He died at Leamington August 12th, 1841 and was buried in the new burial ground of St. Michael's Church, Coventry. His monument bears the following inscription, written by his friend and fellow labourer, George Eld.

Underneath rest the remains of

Thomas Sharp

In grateful record for the memory of whom this tomb is erected by his family. He was distinguished for his literary attainments, and particularly for the zeal and ability with which he devoted himself to elucidate the antiquities of this (his native) city. Beloved by his friends and respected by his fellow citizens, he departed this life in his 71st year, 12th August 1841.

Fretton notes, "He had a family of nine children, two of whom died in their infancy. His widow and seven of his children survived him, four of whom are still living (*in 1871*). Mr. John Nickson Sharp, his second son, who displayed a similar taste for the pursuits of his father, entered the service of the E. I. Company, in the Royal Engineers, where he attained the rank of Major. He died at Lahore, in India about the year 1857. On his death, the remainder of his father's valuable library and collection was dispersed.

This biography of Thomas Sharp is taken from the manuscript for my forthcoming book, 'The Virtuoso's Arrangement'. The work describes individual copies of books published prior to World War II that deal with the British 18th and 19th century tokens. Bookplates, prior ownership inscriptions, annotations and ephemera laid in are recorded along with condition and binding style. Sales records are detailed along with current ownership to create as complete provenances as possible. Brief biographies of past and present owners are given along with portraits when possible. Please note:

I need your help!

If you own any token work published before 1945, please let me know! Just send an e-mail to tokenmann@aol.com with the title of the work and any of the details mentioned above. I will include you as the current owner of the volume or maintain your anonymity as you prefer. It is only with your help that my book can be anywhere near complete. Thanks – Harold Welch

David Spence Collection Becomes the Most Valuable Collection of Trade Tokens Ever Sold in Britain

Peter Preston-Morley

Dix Noonan Webb's second token auction of 2006, the company's first auction at their new venue, the Washington Hotel in London's Mayfair, featured the third and final part of the important 18th century collection formed by the late Dr David L. Spence, of Pittsburgh. Tokens of Wales, Scotland and Ireland, together with 280 duplicates and some token books grossed £37,360 (£43,221 including buyers' premium, or US\$79,527), bringing the grand total for the Spence collection to a sell-out £213,205 (£245,443, or \$451,615), easily a British auction record for any collection of tokens. Demand was perceptibly stronger than at the last dispersal in September 2005, with 119 of the 203 Spence lots secured by British buyers; bidders from North America were more selective on this occasion although many of the rarities in the collection have gone back to the USA.

Among them were the two best Welsh tokens in the sale. A 1797 halfpenny of Bangor, Carnarvonshire (DH 1), featured on the front cover of the catalogue, was knocked down for £820 (£943, or \$1,735), while a uniface die trial for the obverse of a 1792 halfpenny for the Carmarthen ironmaster and banker John Morgan (DH 1), which had languished in the trays of a London dealer for the best part of 18 months before being bought for £30 (\$55) in 1974, needed £800 (£920, or \$1,693). A slightly impaired 1788 silver proof halfpenny of the Parys Mine Co, based at Amlwch on Anglesey (DH 339), which had fetched the phenomenal price of £400 (\$736) at auction in 1984, changed hands for £520 (£598, or \$1,100), while a pattern halfpenny by John Westwood for the same issuer (DH 270) was bought in the room for £370 (£426, or \$784). The Scottish series sold well in excess of expectations, with a commission bidder from Scotland claiming an example of the popular penny featuring the head of the economist Adam Smith (DH Fife 1) for £600 (£690, or \$1,270), while an attractive Aberdeen halfpenny, 1797 (DH 1) needed £500 (£575, or \$1,058). A Dundee penny depicting Adam and Eve (DH Angus 6) brought £340 (£391, or \$720), as did an extremely rare 1797 halfpenny of the Perth issuer John Ferrier (a mule of DH 2 and 1). Irish tokens were keenly contested, with a good group of 31 pieces of the Hibernian Mine Co from Ballymurtagh, co Wicklow, bringing £660 (£759, or \$1,397).

Token books from the Spence library attracted quite a lot of interest, although on the day the big surprise was a bidding battle in the room for a copy of Arthur Waters' specialist work on Thomas Spence, of which 75 copies only were printed in 1917. Bought by David Spence at the Myles Gerson sale in 1986 for £410 (\$755), it was valued on the day at £1,050 (£1,260, or \$2,318). Considerably rarer, though, was a copy of Thomas Spence's 1795 publication, *The Coin Collector's Companion*, also bought in the room for £520 (£624, or \$1,148). A bound collection of the writings of the radical Thomas Paine, which used to belong to the ketchup magnate H.J. Heinz, went to an American commission bidder for £550 (£660, or \$1,215), while a most interesting copy of James Conder's 1799 publication, extensively annotated by a collector at the beginning of the 19th century who bought many tokens from Conder himself, realised £410 (£492, or \$905). A copy of Charles Pye's 1801 reference, once

owned by the dealer Richard Miles and the noted collector Samuel Hamer, needed a surprising £400 (£480, or \$883).

The token element of the morning's proceedings, which grossed £67,125 (£77,319, or \$142,267), also featured a good group of 19th century silver pieces. Here, a rare two-shillings of the Peterborough issuer George Griffin, 1812 (D Northants 1) made £310 (£357, or \$657) and an 1811 shilling from Steyning, Sussex (D 17) sold for £230 (£265, or \$488); unfortunately, three rare tokens of the Chichester traders Henry Comper and Benjamin Charge were not fancied and remained the morning's only unsold lots. A collection of 19th century unofficial farthings was well received and grossed £3,595 (£4,134, or \$7,607), while of the miscellaneous 18th century tokens from other properties, a mule penny of the Parys Mine Co (DH Anglesey 260) brought £320 (£368, or \$677) and a very attractive example of the penny issued by Birmingham auctioneer Benjamin Jacob in 1798 (DH Warwickshire 31), £230 (£265, or \$488).



FROM THE MAILBAG

Dear Mike

I was interested to read Wayne Hood's note on slabbed tokens and I too recall speaking to Wayne Anderson on that very subject. Wayne A. was very anti-slabbing and I think Wayne H. will find that collectors of Conders and other tokens abhor the practice. Over here in the UK the practice of slabbing is not supported by any of the major dealers or auction houses of long standing and collectors don't like it either.

About two years ago a collector in the US consigned a lot of 160 slabbed Conder tokens to one of our auctions. Before I could comment he said "No, I didn't slab them I just acquired them like that. Just crack open the slabs, they will sell much better that way!" How right he was. Slabbed tokens can't reveal their edges, you can't weigh them, you can't handle and appreciate that small piece of history in your hand. One could go on.

But that is not all. As an experiment I decided to see if the DH identifications given on the slab tags [mostly PCGS as you ask, but a few had been done by IGC] were correct. Of the 160 14 had been wrongly described, and 10 of these errors had been caused by the edges being misidentified.

So Wayne, follow the advice of your local coin dealer and crack open your slabbed tokens. You'll be able to appreciate them so much better.

Regards

Peter Preston-Morley
CTCC#135

Iron Bridge Construction By Jim Wahl

The first two iron bridges built in England were the Ironbridge of Coalbrook Dale in Shropshire and the Wear River bridge near Sunderland in Durham. Both are well known subjects of tokens; D & H, Shropshire 6-17, and Durham 2, 3, 10 & 11. It is not the intention of this article to discuss in detail the bridges or their history, as they have been previously described in R.C. Bell's books and also in an excellent article by John Weibel in the CTCC Journal issue of December 15, 1998 (issue No. 10). I have taken the liberty of lifting his picture of the Ironbridge, the best one I have seen of this bridge.

The Ironbridge was built in 1779, of very stout construction but appears graceful and pleasing to the eye. The pictures in this article illustrate some of the methods and details of the initial construction. Picture 2 is of a water color by Elias Martin and was unknown until found in 1997 in Stockholm. It showed construction in a very early stage. The vertical piles were of wood and provided support stays for holding the arch sections in place until they could be connected and braced. They were likely held by rope or cables from the vertical stays until the connection was made. The arch ribs were hoisted to the initial position from a barge on the water. Base plates were anchored to stone footings. The arch rib half section member was then placed in a groove in the base plate and then raised into position and bolted to the opposite rib at the center of the span. Pictures 3 and 4 are of details of joints in the iron members and of some ornamental details. The joints are made as if they were of timber, consequently were very overbuilt in the use of materials.

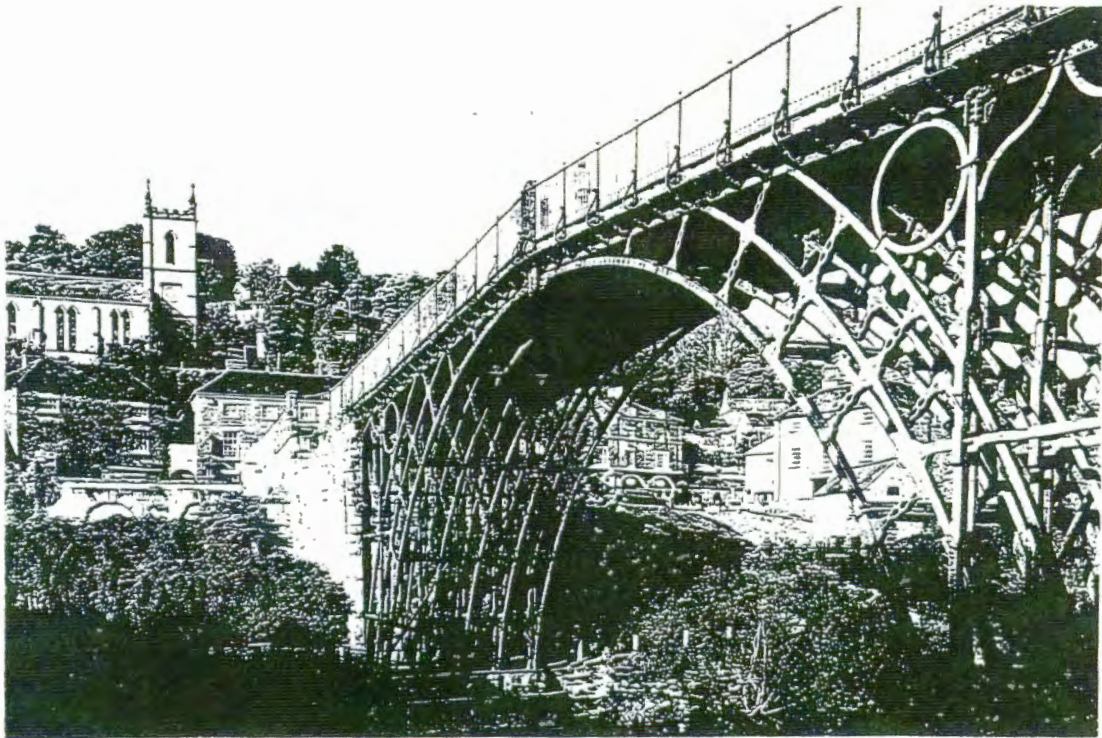
Picture 5 is of the Wear River bridge under construction. The design of this bridge shows quite an advance over the Ironbridge in a brief time of about 15 years. The greater span required that a different support system than of the type used for the Ironbridge. The arch ribs were flattened by fabricating on an arc of radius of 222 feet, resulting in a large saving of iron materials. Three rows of piles were driven into the river bottom, then capped and falsework erected above as support for placement of the arch ribs sections. This enabled actual erection of the six arch ribs in only ten days. Note the hand operated derrick on the abutment for receiving materials. There was a similar derrick on the opposite abutment.

Seating the arch ribs high on the abutments saved much weight of iron. The Ironbridge ribs rested on abutments close to the water, necessitating iron members below the center of curvature. The reference cited in this article says the bridge had 378 tons of iron, but R.C. Bell's Commercial Coins gives the weight of iron of 278 tons. Depending on which figure is correct, the weight of iron was 3.78 tons per foot of span or 2.78 tons per foot of span. The Wear River bridge span of 236 feet had 260 tons of iron, or 1.10 tons per foot of span, a much more economical use of materials.

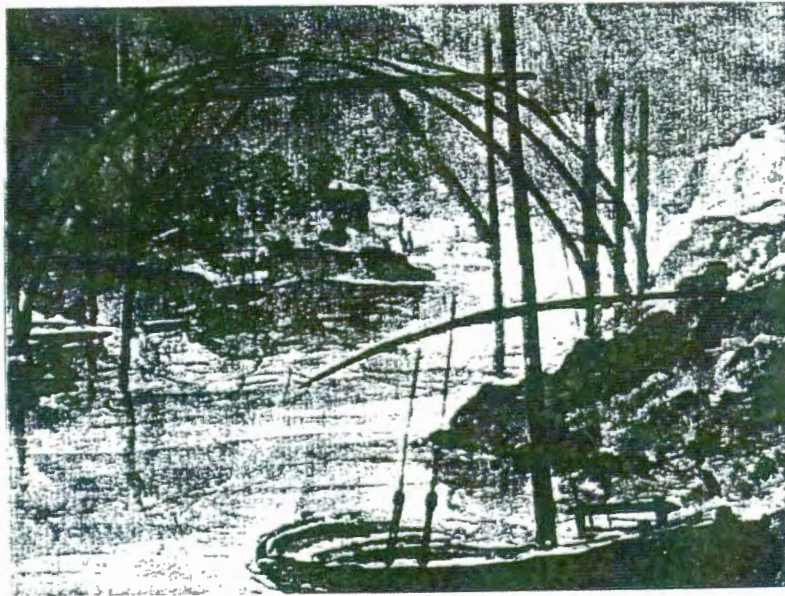
The Wear River bridge was patterned after a design patented by Thomas Paine in 1788. A model of his design was erected in London in 1790 in an attempt to get financing for a bridge. The attempt failed and the materials were seized by creditors. R.C. Bell's Private Tokens and Tradesmen's Tickets says the materials were used in construction of the Wear River bridge, but I do not believe this is correct. Paine's model had a span of 90 feet and weighed 36 tons. The bridge was privately financed by Rowland Burdon at a cost of 40,000 pounds and opened in 1796.

Reference: Bridges, by David J. Brown. Published in 2005.





1.



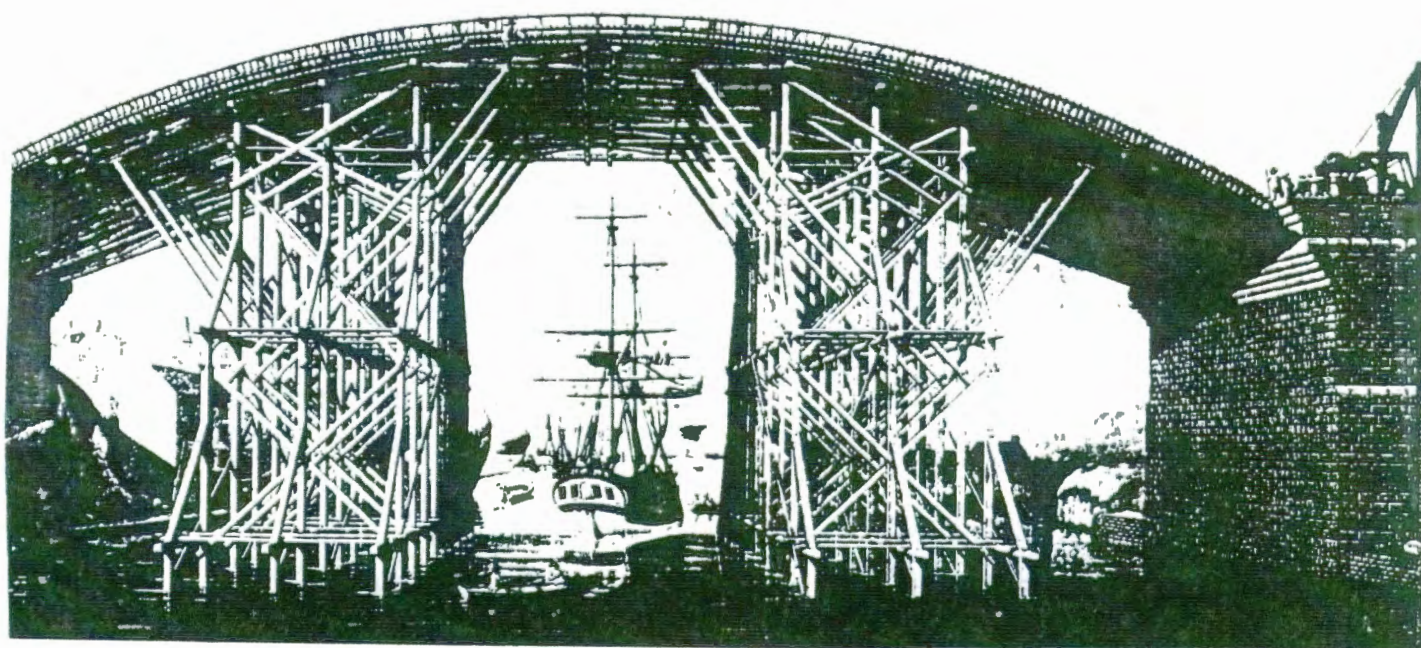
2.



3.



4.



5.

Issac Newton's Token(s)

Tom Fredette

I don't know what I may seem to the world, but as to myself, I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay undiscovered before me. (Issac Newton)

...from Berlinski



From time to time, this writer has posed a question having to do with the immortality conferred upon a subject when that person's bust is struck upon a token blank. Such is the case with the tokens of Sir Issac Newton. At this early juncture, the writer would digress and point out that while a number of tokens are listed by Dalton & Hamer (Middlesex Halfpence 1033-35 & Farthings 1151-63) with the Newton bust, it is the bust used on the Halfpence issue or variations of it which account for the presence of this great man in the late Eighteenth century token series. Waters addresses the writer's premise by implication when in his *Notes* he states that: "It is difficult to explain why Newton's bust was used. He had been Master of the Mint in 1699, but had been dead for some 66 years when the tokens were struck."

English history is full of great personages and Issac Newton was just one of them. But in terms of his contribution to our understanding of the relationships between the natural and physical world, he stands far above them all. R.C. Bell tells us that he was born on Christmas Day "...in 1642 at Woolsthorpe in Lincolnshire, of an ancient family in that country." This was a little over a quarter-century after the death of Shakespeare. 1642 was the year Galileo died. This was truly a time of ideas.



D&H Middlesex 1033-5



Above: Medallic portrait of Newton by John Croker, Chief Engraver of the Mint from 1705 to 1741. (Actual size 51.5mm)

We've all heard the expression: "The apple never falls far from the tree." For Issac Newton, the fact that the apple would fall from the tree was obvious - as to why it would fall and fall downward was not. Of all his contributions to science, those he made while addressing his curiosity about the "drawing power of nature" (gravity) are, to this day, of the greatest benefit to us.

David Berlinski in his biography, *Newton's Gift* paints a picture of a loner, a person careless about his personal habits, someone who would tumble out of bed in the morning in the same clothes he wore the day before, splash some water on his face, sit down at his desk and continue with the writing of the previous day. According to Berlinski, he was remote, deeply thoughtful and apparently curious about a lot more than apples. In a lifelong dedication to scientific inquiry he gave us, in a sense not only the moon and the stars, but the universe - big and small.

When one explores the many sources for information about this great man, one finds much but for a layman not much to really connect to. Issac Newton was far above most mortals in his genius. He kept to himself. He had a number of acquaintances but few friends. He was difficult to get to know. In a summation of his life Berlinski says this:

Newton stands alone. There is no underestimating his influence; there is no evading his authority. In creating the science of rational mechanics, Newton determined the goals of mathematical physics as well as its methods...Physicists now think of physics in terms of ever more general and thus ever more universal laws (and) ...principles so powerful that they will provide a complete account of matter from its smallest to its largest state and from the beginning of creation to its very end.

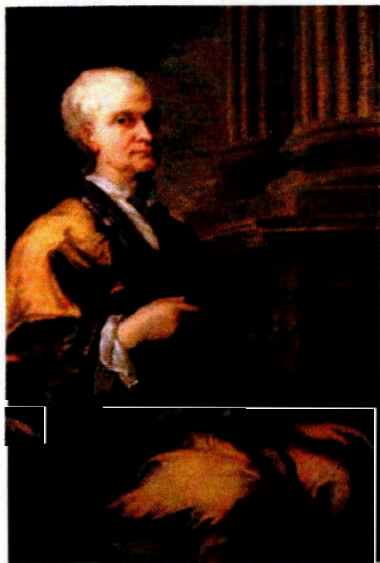
We as token and coin collectors can know Sir Issac Newton better after he had taken charge of the Royal Mint. He was appointed Warden in 1696 at the age of 54. He had reached a time in his life when he was pretty much finished thinking great thoughts and explaining deep theories about the universe.

According to *The Royal Mint*:

It had not been intended that the great scientist should devote himself to the Mint, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been quick to tell him the post 'has not too much bus'ness to require more attention than you may spare.' Yet from the start he chose to throw himself into the work, becoming fully involved in the apprehension and prosecution of counterfeiters.

In 1699 he became Master of the Mint and remained in that position until his death on March 20, 1727 at the age of 84.

Sir Issac Newton did not possess all of the answers. He did not have all of the questions. He had many answers to many questions. Certainly, we know that when it came to the laws of physics and the calculus, he had answers to questions that had been posed by few people before him and few since. Few have been his equal in attempting to explain and understand the natural and physical world in which we live. He, more than anyone, typified his age.



From a portrait by James Thornhill
in 1712
The original is in Woolsthorpe Manor



Above. Walnut cabinet which Mint
tradition associates with Newton.

Sources Used

Dalton, R. and S.H. Hamer, *The Provisional Token-Coinage of the 18th Century*.

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Waters, Arthur, W., *Notes on Eighteenth Century Tokens*.

Web site:

<http://www.gap-system.org-history/PictDisplay/Newton.html-5k>



From a portrait by Enoch Seeman
in 1726



Isaac Newton
Middlesex 1033 Image by Cheapside tokens

Dublin 34 *Bis*, Dublin 112 *Bis II*, Dublin 285 *Bis II* & Dublin 291 *Bis*: Four New Varieties of Camac Tokens

Gregg A. Silvis

Harp with Six Strings

1. Dublin 34 *Bis*

Obverse: As Dublin 34, but a later die state. The die has been lapped, probably to remove excess rust, to such an extent that the sixth, counting from left to right, string of the harp and the upper portion of the harp are no longer visible. This lapping has also diminished the die flaw to the left of Hibernia visible in the D&H plate of Dublin 34.

Reverse: As Dublin 70

Edge: No. 1

Reverse Rotation: ~20° CCW

Note: This token was acquired from the Dr. Richard Doty Reference Collection of Conder Tokens. It was listed there as a "Dublin mule --- 35/40." Allan Davisson's 1990 reprint of Dalton & Hamer lists a Dublin 38 *Bis* on page xxviii. It is described as "O: As obverse of 38 R: As reverse of 40," but is unfortunately not illustrated. Perhaps the reverse on Dublin 38 *Bis* is also that of Dublin 70?



Harp with Eight Strings

2. Dublin 112 *Bis II*

Obverse: Unlisted. **ACTOF** with no space between the words, which is diagnostic for this obverse.

Reverse: As Dublin 151

Edge: Plain

Reverse Rotation: ~30° CCW



TURNER CAMAC

Harp with Seven Strings

3. Dublin 285 *Bis II*

Obverse: As Dublin 285

Reverse: As Dublin 288

Edge: **PAYABLE IN DUBLIN OR BALLYMURTAGH**

Reverse Rotation: Slightly CCW, but in the range of normal.

Note: Jerry Bobbe has assigned Dublin 285 *Bis* to an unlisted variety with the obverse of Dublin 285 and the reverse of Dublin 286.



TURNER CAMAC
Harp with Eight Strings

4. Dublin 291 *Bis*

Obverse: As Dublin 291, but extremely rusted.

Reverse: Unlisted. A curved die flaw, possibly the bottom of a mispunched C, above C of CHAIRMAN.

Edge: PAYABLE IN DUBLIN OR BALLYMURTAGH

Reverse Rotation: Normal



Die flaw above C

Once again, a special thanks is due Jerry Bobbe for his observations on these new varieties.

Conder token questions

Having collected Conder tokens for a number of years I still have a number of questions on the subject that hopefully someone in the collectors club can answer.

1. Are there any presses surviving from the period, in museums perhaps that can be viewed?
2. Are there any dies still in existence?
3. How did they put the edge inscriptions on the tokens and at what stage in the process?
4. How did Dalton and Hamer manage to catalogue so many tokens, especially those that don't seem to be in evidence today?
5. Where are all the tokens now that Dalton and Hamer catalogued?
6. Could you run a section where members looking for particular tokens can list their wants?

Conder Poem

As a collector of Conders and particularly those of Leek in Staffordshire I came across a poem. The introduction states:-

These coins though generally welcomed as a means of readier exchange, were received by some with disfavour, whilst a few absolutely declined to accept them. Amongst the latter was Mr. John Fowler of Horton Hall, near Leek. Writing about the time the coins were issued, a rhyming silk manufacturer, who disapproved of Mr. Fowler's refusal, said: -

*Pray friend John! Why set thy face
Against the coinage of this place,
It surely argues want of sense,
Because thou 'st nought to do with pence.
Hannah sells, receives, and keeps the till: -
(All's cream and grist that goes to Hannah's mill;
Potatoes cabbage and all sorts of trash
Are here converted into cash:-)
This good dame Hannah, as we suppose,
That leads poor Jacky by the nose!
Do all things, John, for good of trade,
Because thy bread and butter's made;
Cut and served up with heavy thumbs:-
So, eat thy loaf, and give Hannah th' crumbs*

Perhaps because of the sentiments expressed in this poem the Leek token issued in 1794 bore a figure of a justice standing on the obverse replacing the previous caduceus and bale of goods. The wording FOR CHANGE NOT FRAUD says it all. That these tokens were to be used as change and not to rob the receiver. There is no edge inscription on this token, the edge being milled instead. A reflection of how widespread the use of tokens had become with no boundaries placed on acceptance.

Richard Coult

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THE TOKEN EXCHANGE AND MART



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- U.S. Colonial Coinage.
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